EHUD BARAK

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Ehud Barak is an internationally renowned leader and statesman who has most recently served as Defense Minister of Israel (2007-2013). He has just announced his retirement from politics after almost two decades in the top ranks of the Israeli government, including terms as Israel's 10th Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Interior. His political activities were preceded by an illustrious 36-year military career that culminated in his appointment as Chief of General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces.

During a hiatus from public life (2001-2007), Barak applied his formidable skills to the private sector, where he acted as a consultant and strategic adviser for prestigious private equity and hedge funds, as well as consulting on security-related issues and earning accolades on the international lecture circuit.

An acknowledged expert in the fields of security and the management of complex large-scale systems, Barak is recognized for his exceptional analytical skills and his eminently pragmatic yet original approach to strategic planning and problem-solving. His wide-ranging experience, educational background and unsurpassed acquaintance with world and national leaders in diplomacy, politics, business and academia combine to give him a distinct qualitative edge in the macro-analysis of world trends in economics, security and political developments.

EXPERIENCE

Defense Minister (June 2007 – March 2012)

- Revitalized and upgraded the IDF after the 2006 Second Lebanon War
- What else can we say here? The Syrian reactor has never been officially acknowledged, and both the string of assassinations (Mughniyeh, Jabari, etc) and the two Gaza operations are controversial

Prime Minister of Israel (1999-2001)

- Led Israel out of a prolonged recession into an economic boom, with a 5.9% annual growth rate, record foreign investments, near-zero inflation, a halved deficit and significantly reduced debt to GDP ratio
- Fulfilled his campaign promise of withdrawing Israeli troops from South Lebanon after the IDF's presence there for 18 contentious years

- Conducted far-reaching peace negotiations with both Syria and the Palestinian Authority, which regrettably ended without the breakthroughs necessary to reach final agreements
- During this period, Barak served simultaneously as Israel's Defense Minister

Minister of the Interior (1995) under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Minister of Foreign Affairs (1995-96) under Prime Minister Shimon Peres after Rabin's assassination in November 1995

MILITARY CAREER

The most decorated soldier in the history of the IDF, Barak masterminded and participated in some of Israel's most daring commando operations

Chief of General Staff, Israel Defense Forces (1991-1995)

- Implemented the first Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinian Authority
- Played a major role in the negotiations leading to Israel's 1994 peace treaty with Jordan

Commander and member of Sayeret Matkal, Israel's elite commando unit

- Took part in a number of legendary commando operations, including freeing the hostages from a hijacked Sabena airliner in 1972; disguising himself as a woman to carry out the assassinations of PLO terrorists in Beirut in 1973; and being a key architect of the rescue of hostages aboard an Air France jet hijacked to Entebbe Airport in Uganda in 1976

Filled other top positions in the IDF, including Head of Planning, Head of Military Intelligence, Commander of the Central Command and Deputy Chief of General Staff

EDUCATION

1968 Bachelor's degree in Physics and Mathematics, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

1979 Master's degree in Engineering Economic Systems, Stanford University, California

LANGUAGES – Hebrew (mother tongue); English and Arabic (highly fluent)

HOBBIES – A true Renaissance man, Ehud Barak is an accomplished pianist, an avid reader and a science aficionado.